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iran urges all pilgrims to demonstrate

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Iranian religious organisation urged all Muslims making the pilgrimage in Mecca to defy a Saudi ban and take part in an anti-U.S. rally planned by Iranian pilgrims, the official news agency IRNA said Sunday. "We call on all pilgrims, especially politically-aware Iranians, to take part in the demonstration as in previous years to foil the plots of the enemies of Islam," the Islamic Propagation Organization said, quoted by IRNA. The Mecca gathering is the "best opportunity and Mecca the best place for Muslims to express their hatred of the infidels, notably the United States and Israel," it added. The head of the Iranian pilgrimage delegation, Mohammad Mohammadi Reyskhan, told a group of pilgrims Saturday that holding the rally was a "religious duty" and urged everyone to participate on Tuesday (see page 2). The anti-U.S. and anti-Israel demonstrations are "aimed at fostering Islamic unity and enlightening the ummah (Muslims) about the dangers from non-believers," he said. Mr. Reyskhan, however, urged the pilgrims to be "disciplined and peaceful" to avoid any "unseemly incidents." Saudi authorities warned last week they would not allow Iranian pilgrims to carry out their planned demonstration.

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Northerners said poised for major assault on Aden

Combined agency dispatches

NORTHERN TROOPS loyal to Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh were reportedly closing in on the southern stronghold of Aden in a three-pronged assault on Sunday.

In anticipation of assault, southern Yemeni officials have started to arm civilians to bolster Aden's defences as their troops battled to try to block northern forces deployed on at least four fronts.

"If they (northerners) do not achieve a breakthrough in the next 48 hours they could lose this war because they have pushed in with all their forces," said a southern Yemeni colonel at a southern army checkpoint 65 kilometres north of Aden.

He said arms were being handed out to residents to increase Aden's defences against the northern forces waging a 12-day-old civil war to topple their leaders based in the city.

He added: "We have given all our civilians arms and ammunition, and they are able mountain fighters who were known as the Red Wolves" during the war against British rule which ended in 1967 with the emergence of the Marxist state of South Yemen.

An American oil expert in Aden said that for the past four days the army had been giving civilians an AK-47 assault rifle and four ammunition clips each.

On the diplomatic front, an Arab League delegation in Sanaa since Thursday has so

far failed to broker a ceasefire between the rival leaders of Yemen, a country unified just four years ago.

The delegation met Abdul Azz Abdul Ghani, member of the collective presidency, who said Sanaa would agree to a ceasefire only if vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh surrendered to go on trial as a war criminal.

He said the northern forces were about 30 kilometres short of the base.

"Our army is fighting a defensive war. The northern army has taken the initiative in the conflict and is advancing on several fronts, but they haven't made a decisive breakthrough," he said.

Al Adan, stretching over several square kilometres, serves as "the (southern) joint command centre for all the military fronts," said the officer.

In the latest evasions, 500 people arrived in Djibouti by sea on Chinese and Russian vessels, including 356 Chinese workers who were to be repatriated by air on Monday. A group of 185 Egyptians flew to Cairo from Sanaa.

A northern military spokesman, Colonel Ali Al Jaffi, said his Al Anqila Brigade had broken through southern defences in the Abyan region, east of Aden.

An independent source in the south confirmed that heavy artillery shelling 30 kilometres from Aden blocked the road to the eastern town of Zinjibar.

But in Aden itself, although cut off from the world apart from by sea, the situation was still calm, a correspondent said. The city is sheltering refugees from the fronts.

With the net closing on the port city, fighting was also under way on the third front at Kharaz, near the Bab Al Mandeb, a gateway to the Red Sea, as northern troops tried to approach Aden from the coast.

But in Aden itself, although cut off from the world apart from by sea, the situation was still calm, a correspondent said. The city is sheltering refugees from the fronts.

On Sunday, the south had mobilised its navy and air force to help repel the assault, while Col. Jaffi said his brigade had advanced to just 20 kilometres



Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor on Sunday receive Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew and his wife (Petra photo)

King and Queen meet Lee

AMMAN (Petra) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor on Sunday received at Al Nadwa Palace visiting Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew, his wife and an accompanying delegation.

King Hussein and Mr. Lee exchanged views on various

regional and international issues as well as bilateral relations and means of enhancing them, particularly in economic fields.

King Hussein and Queen Noor hosted a lunch in honour of Mr. and Mrs. Lee and the accompanying delegation.

The banquet was attended by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein and Princess Rania, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the King's Political Adviser Marwan Al Qassem and the wives of Jordanian officials attending the meeting.

PLO needs more time to review bank licensing and dinar dealings

AMMAN (Petra) — The Joint Jordanian-Palestinian Economic Committee ended its meetings in Amman Sunday leaving some issues unresolved, according to Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Information Minister Jawad Al Anani, who headed the Jordanian side to the talks.

"We have agreed on numerous basic points related to cooperation in a number of fields, but two points remain 'suspended' because the Palestinian side felt that it is in need of more time to study them thoroughly and perhaps they would be taken up with the Palestinian leadership," Mr. Anani said in a statement summing up the final session.

The two points revolve around the method of Jordanian-Palestinian coordination in licensing new banks and their dealings in the Jordanian dinar as well as the manner in which the two sides will settle payments for exchanged goods, Mr. Anani said.

Mr. Anani said the meetings, which started here Tuesday, were characterised with frankness and the two sides delved deep into the substance and to appropriate mechanism for the implementation of the.

The soldiers checked the policemen's guns were not loaded and told them, "You have no right to be here, leave immediately."

More Israeli jeeps turned up to check no other police were in the sector.

Four Gazans were wounded in a shoot-out between Israeli troops and Palestinians.

The army said only two Palestinians aboard a truck from which the attack came were lightly wounded.

However, according to doctors at Khan Yunis hospital,

be conducted freely and exempted from all forms of duty and taxes," said Dr. Qouriea, head of the Economic Department of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

"In matters related to banking and monetary dealings we have agreed on issuing licences to all Jordanian banks operating in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and that the Jordanian dinar remain the main currency and not as one of the different currencies," he added.

"We have agreed that after settling issues related to trade, customs, tariffs, transit, tourism, monetary and banking procedures and the settlement of payments, we would move to the next step, which entails discussion in agriculture, industry, transport and contracting," Dr. Anani said.

Voicing Jordan's appreciation of the Palestinian side to the talks, Dr. Anani said that the Palestinians "displayed genuine desire to arrive at U.N. overall formula for cooperation in area that would safeguard the interests of the two sides."

The two sides agreed to form subcommittees to handle such issues as trade, monetary affairs, banking and tourism matters and expressed hope that these will start meetings as soon as possible.

Dr. Qouriea admitted that "certain outstanding points remain unresolved and require clarification from the Palestinian leadership which would deal with them in the next two days after which we would return to Amman to resume the talks."

"We have agreed that trade between Palestine and Jordan

Christopher presents Israeli response to Syrian demands

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher went straight into talks with President Hafez Al Assad here Sunday at the start of his second peace shuttle in Syria and Israel.

The secretary was to deliver Israel's response to Mr. Assad's counter-proposals, following an initial Israeli offer of a phased withdrawal from the strategic Golan Heights.

The Syrian president had asked for clarifications.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has offered to return three of five Druze villages on the Heights as a first stage in a three-step withdrawal over five to eight years from the plateau which Israel seized in 1967.

Damascus Radio said Mr. Christopher would find in Syria a readiness to "negotiate seriously on ideas and proposals" which could lead to a settlement, in contrast to Israel which was "squandering peace opportunities."

Many feared that if Mr. Christopher's withdrawal continued for long — or if he resigned — the country would plunge into a financial crisis.

government daily Tishrin said.

A Tishrin commentary headlined "Will Israel take the adequate decision?" said the ball lay in Israel's court "and those who give it support," in reference to the United States.

A senior Israeli official said Mr. Christopher would try to persuade Syria to set up a joint military commission with Israel to "draft security arrangements" for the Heights.

But the proposal was likely to be flatly rejected in Damascus, where an official said only.

last week that Israel should complete a total pullout from the Heights before security arrangements could be discussed.

Syria has insisted it would not surrender a single inch of the plateau which commands access to Damascus as well as northern Israel, but it has not refused to discuss ways of finding a settlement.

Diplomats here and in Beirut said that the exchange of messages between Syria and Israel was a step in the right direction, although both sides were far from a breakthrough.

A Western diplomat in Damascus said the counter-proposals submitted to Israel by Syria "included some very

(Continued on page 5)

specific questions which opened the way for a concrete and serious debate."

Mr. Christopher intended flying to Israel on Monday evening to carry Mr. Assad's latest thoughts to Mr. Rabin and might return to Damascus later in the week.

But he has been at pains to play down expectations of a breakthrough on this trip, saying the road to Israeli-Syrian peace would be long and hard.

Mr. Rabin has yet to commit himself to full withdrawal, though most commentators believe he has accepted that necessary if he wants to make peace with Syria.

Before he speaks of the extent of Israeli withdrawal, Mr. Rabin wants Syria to promise to establish full diplomatic relations with the Jewish state, including trade, tourism and cultural exchanges.

Mr. Christopher explored these issues in his last visit to the region less than two weeks ago and said the negotiations were entering a new, substantive phase.

But few details of the talks emerged and Mr. Christopher

(Continued on page 5)

Only Gaza City centre still occupied by Israeli army

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (Agencies) — Israeli forces had completed their withdrawal from all but the centre of Gaza City by Sunday night, leaving the new Palestinian police force in charge of all but the Jewish settlements on the strip.

An army spokesman said 1,324 members of the force had entered the strip from Egypt and 300 more from Jordan since Tuesday night.

And on Sunday, Israeli soldiers ejected two Palestinian policemen from the area around the old Israeli prison in the city centre where they were visiting relatives.

All the other positions have been evacuated since Monday night, leaving the new Palestinian police force in charge of all but the Jewish settlements on the strip.

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After 27 years of occupation the army is redeploying around the 20 Gaza settlements to protect the 4,000 settlers during the five-year interim period of autonomy.

The soldiers who remained on guard in the city appeared tense and nervous.

After being fired on Saturday

day night at the governor's headquarters, soldiers rioted wildly shooting in every direction. A Palestinian sitting playing in a nearby street was shot dead.

And on Sunday, Israeli soldiers ejected two Palestinian policemen from the area around the old Israeli prison in the city centre where they were visiting relatives.

The army said only two Palestinians aboard a truck from which the attack came were lightly wounded.

However, according to doctors at Khan Yunis hospital,

(Continued on page 5)

Hariri ends strike but loses face

BEIRUT (R) — Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri has ended his week-long stoppage that plunged Lebanon into its worst political crisis in nearly two years, but one analyst said on Sunday the billionaire leader's image had been tarnished.

"The crisis is over," the political analyst, who asked not to be named, told Reuters. "But it is yet to be seen how much it damaged Hariri. The whole thing was a political blunder and he was made to pay."

"His image has been tarnished and he has lost some of his credibility."

Mr. Hariri, one of the world's richest men, went on strike last Sunday when President Elias Hrawi and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri blocked his proposal to bring in four new ministers — two heavyweight Christian politicians to calm Christian fears that their minority is being shunted aside, and two ministers to help speed the government's post-war reconstruction programme.

Before being named prime

minister in October 1992, Mr. Hariri promised to sink part of his fortune into restoring the centre of Beirut, devastated by 15 years of civil war.

"I want to go down in the history books as the man who resurrected Beirut," he told reporters, saying this was just a starting point for rebuilding the whole country through private enterprise.

When he took over, he represented a startling break with traditional Lebanese politicians who stumbled through the civil war and then failed to rehabilitate the country when peace arrived in 1990.

The analyst said after last week's crisis, Mr. Hariri was returning to work without achieving any of his demands, which ranged from the proposed cabinet reshuffle to defining his relations with Mr. Hrawi and Mr. Berri.

But sources close to Mr. Hariri, while acknowledging that the stoppage affair was a setback, said returning to work marked the start of a process designed to resolve the sticking

(Continued on page 5)

Jordan, Syria sign minutes

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian and Syrian governments Sunday signed the minutes of meetings of the Joint Jordanian-Syrian Economic Committee which concluded in Amman earlier in the day. The documents were signed on the Jordanian side by Industry and Trade Minister Rima Khalaf and on the Syrian side by Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Mohammad Al Imadi (see page 3). Ms. Khalaf told reporters following the signing ceremony that the agreement between the two countries is considered the first step towards tackling the imbalance in trade between the two countries. Ms. Khalaf stressed that the committee's meeting dealt with some problems impeding the flow of Jordanian commodities to the Syrian market. The two countries, she said, have agreed to the need of revising lists of exchanged commodities. "We tackled at the committee's meetings issues relating to transport... and banking arrangements," said Ms. Khalaf adding that the two sides have agreed to set up experts committees to prepare a future work plan for Jordanian-Syrian economic cooperation. This plan will be later endorsed by the joint ministerial economic committee, she said.

House amends law on investment corporation

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament met on Sunday under the chairmanship Speaker Taher Al Masri and in the presence of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Cabinet members.

At the outset of the meeting, the House referred to its law committee the 1982 tenants and landlords draft law returned to it by the Upper House of Parliament (Senate) after introducing several amendments to it.

The House approved an amendment to the Jordanian Investment Corporation law after a thorough debate, with the main focus on the law's eighth article regarding the classification of the corporation's employees.

The second paragraph of the article, which stipulates that the employees of the Pension Fund be moved to the corporation and be included in the civil service system once the law is enacted, was the main point of controversy.

Some deputies demanded that the paragraph be kept as it is until the government prepares a special system on the corporation, stressing that the corporation deals with large amounts of money belonging to retired civil servants and that it should be given incentives to attract proficient personnel.

Others accused the government of using double standards in dealing with corporations when giving some large incentives under special regulations.

They claimed that civil servants will remain the less fortunate and demanded that the special laws and systems be substituted by a general system of incentives for all employees of the government and its corporations.

Dr. Majali replied to the deputies by saying that the paragraph was enacted and the issue was over when the corporation's employees were moved to the corporation and included in the civil service system.

The House also decided to return to the government a law on the Jordanian Exports Guarantee Corporation since many deputies expressed their belief that there was no need to establish such a corporation and urged the government to refrain from vying from the private sector in its projects.

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Fishing dispute in Gaza too much for Palestinian police force to handle

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

DEIR AL BALAH — It took only a few days for Palestinian policemen patrolling the Gaza Strip to get their first taste of difficulties that are in store for them as they got ready to oversee Palestinian authority take over this coastal strip.

Factional strife and a lack of an indigenous authority for decades has set the stage for major security challenges for a force initially designed to relieve its people of the pains of Israeli occupation.

It was in Deir Al Balah, a Gaza town south of Gaza City and north of Rafah, that Palestinian policemen faced one of their first challenges. But a civil dispute proved to be too great a challenge for the police force and left many Gazans wondering how effective the police force would be in dealing with factional violence.

A dispute between two fisher families in Deir Al Balah evolved into an armed standoff between two traditional Gazan clans from Deir Al Balah, a member of Deir Al Balah told the Jordan Times.

"These are traditional fishing families who have often fought about territorial fishing rights," said Ahmad Abu Yusuf.

"The boys in the family pulled out their guns and the member of one clan informed the police," he said.

Five Palestinian policemen rushed to the scene of the dispute but there was solution after a three-hour discussion with the involved parties and the police.

Unable to resolve and mediate the dispute, the police then called a local unit of the Fateh Hawks, the armed military unit of Fateh,

to help resolve the conflict.

"The police stayed for another hour and then told the Fateh Hawks to please stay and deal with the family squabble," Mr. Abu Yusuf, who was on hand to witness the incident, said.

The Fateh Hawks reportedly found a solution and created a demarcation line for fishing rights of the two clans that the involved parties agreed to respect.

News of the incident quickly spread through the Gaza Strip and to the West Bank. Palestinians felt the episode was "food for thought."

"This is disturbing," said Kamal Dweik of the Hebron Municipality, who was waiting for Palestinian National Security Forces to enter Jericho last week.

"We will grant them a honeymoon period in which they can get familiar with the situation but they must realize that resolving disputes will be a great portion of their task."

A Jericho shopkeeper Naef Erakat agreed. "This police force has a great burden to bear on its shoulders. One of their first task will be to introduce law and order and help create a civic society."

The shooting incident involving the death of an 11-year-old boy in Jericho on Friday was undoubtedly the most embarrassing of any that the Palestinian police force could have faced. But as some Jericho residents say, "it is also a warning to the police that they are not here on a vacation and must take their responsibilities seriously."

"This is not a game, it is state building," warned Mr. Dweik. "This police force is part of the state building process. They must know it and act accordingly."

Red Cross asks Yemen to move Somalis to safety

SANAA (R) — Red Cross officials have asked northern Yemeni authorities to move thousands of Somali refugees from a camp where hundreds were killed in crossfire between Yemen's civil war foes.

"The population of the (Al Koud refugee) camp is at great risk of becoming indirect targets of the fighting," International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) delegate Arnold Luethold said on Sunday.

"The ICRC and the UNHCR are insisting on the evacuation of the refugees, which should be done in a proper manner to ensure their safety," Mr. Luethold said.

He was speaking a day after he and officials from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) visited Al Koud camp for refugees who have fled Somalia's civil war only to be caught up in Yemen's conflict which erupted on May 4.

The camp, which housed about 10,000 refugees, lies on the southern Yemeni coast, about 50 kilometres northeast of Aden, the stronghold of South Yemeni leaders and prime target of the north.

Refugees clustered on a sandy plain a few kilometres from the camp told a visiting Reuter correspondent on Friday that 400 to 450 of the camp people had been killed and 600 wounded after being caught up in fighting on the first day of the war.

About 3,000 people were sitting around on the plain. Others had fled to the mountains or to nearby towns.

"We called on (northern

military commanders) to do all that was necessary to evacuate civilians from the field of combat," Mr. Luethold said. Northern forces control the area around Al Koud.

Mr. Luethold said he heard estimates of between 100 and 473 people dead and wounded. Northern army officers based near the camp told Reuters they thought 200 refugees were killed.

The Somalis said dogs were eating the bodies of the dead, still lying in the open because burial parties had been driven off by shooting from southern Yemeni warships at sea.

Mr. Luethold said the camp, which was run by the UNHCR before the war, came under fire while the delegation was there.

Meanwhile a group of southern organisations in Aden called on the Arab League to "intervene directly and quickly to end the fighting."

But in Cairo, Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdin Meguid ruled out any early Arab summit to discuss the crisis. Last week a league emergency meeting turned down an Egyptian proposal to send an Arab peacekeeping force to Yemen.

An Arab League delegation has been in Yemen since Thursday trying to broker a ceasefire.

It was also to deliver a call from Dr. Abdin Meguid for an immediate ceasefire.

Southern leaders also called on the Arab League to intervene to ensure the implementation of a reconciliation accord signed between the two sides in February in Amman.

For the past 11 days the northern forces of Ali Abdal-



Palestinian policemen walk around a former Israeli detention centre in Jericho which is now the headquarters of Palestinian self-rule (AFP photo)

Policemen find the land of their dreams

By Nejla Sammakia
Agence France Presse

JERICHO, occupied West Bank — Abu Kifah was born in Jordan but grew up dreaming of a homeland in Palestine that he knew only from the stories he heard from his parents and grandparents.

Now he still cannot believe that like hundreds of other Palestinian police who crossed into Jericho he has finally reached the land of his dreams.

"It was a dream. Until now we were not fully awake," he said.

"I can't really believe I am here. I heard so much about Palestine from the old people."

More than 400 men of the

new Palestinian police force crossed over from Jordan this week for the transfer to power from Israel which took place Friday.

Hundreds of Jericho residents rushed out to meet the policemen who had tears in their eyes as they were bused in.

They were cheered all the way into town by youths shouting "Allahu Akbar," and were welcomed by music bands, marches, and ululating women.

"To my parents and grandparents, it was the most beautiful place on earth, a blessed land, with rich soil and all kinds of trees," said Abu Kifah.

For years he kept the dream alive in the military camps where he was trained to fight and pursue the Palestinian struggle.

Now Abu Kifah, or father of struggle in Arabic, is part of a joint patrol driving with Israeli soldiers along Jericho's highways.

"I am working within a framework. I take orders from my superiors, but they (the Israelis) are still my enemy," Abu Kifah said, nodding his head toward a jeep with four Israeli soldiers parked under a tree near him.

There seemed to be little fraternisation between the two, but they had nevertheless shared soft drinks and sandwiches earlier as they rested

between patrols.

"We sent over drinks to them, and they offered us food, but we don't talk much with them."

Abu Kifah, born in Egypt, had never thought he would have the chance to see the land of his parents' dreams.

His most recent images of the occupied territories had been coloured by the Palestinian intifada, which broke out in the occupied territories in December 1987.

When he heard his friends' dramatic tales of the battles in the territories or watched them on television, Salem longed to be a hero or even a martyr.

"I would have liked to be killed or injured, but luck was not on my side," he said.

Ride through Yemen provides brush with war

NAOIL THURAH, Yemen (R) — The clatter of an anti-aircraft gun brought our journey through spectacular Yemeni mountains to a juddering halt.

The driver slammed on the brakes and reporters scrambled out of his vehicle for cover from the hostile warplane whose arrival overhead the gunfire announced.

The party of reporters being ferried by northern forces through a mountain pass to cover the frontlines of Yemen's civil war began to feel as if they might become its latest casualty.

The warplane banked as it came in to bomb us.

There was little cover. The ack-ack gun, booming from a nearby northern post above the road, was missing its target.

As the reporters ran about aimlessly, I noted gloomily that it was Friday 13th.

To our right was the rocky side of the mountain. To the left was a ravine more than the road, was missing its target.

The plane dropped its bomb. It fell into the ravine, sending up plumes of smoke and debris.

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Features

HUMAN RIGHTS FILE

Murder in the name of 'honour'

By Waleed Sadi

THERE IS no human rights treaty that does not accord primacy to the right to life. This priority consideration of the right to life began with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 where Article 3 stipulates that "everyone has right to life, liberty and security of persons." Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights echoed the same principle when it declared that "every human being has the inherent right to life, that this right shall be protected by law" and that "no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of life." The same sentiment about the priority of the right to life is repeated over and over again in practically all the other human rights instruments either expressly or by implication as indeed is the case in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Since this is the case and there is an international unanimity that the right to life comes ahead of all other rights, since without it there can be no possibility to enjoy them, I wonder why Jordan keeps on ignoring or brushing aside the right to life of the many girls and women who are murdered year in and year out in the name of "family honour."

The case of Khawla, the 15-year-old girl who was shot to death by her brother a few days ago because she was suspected of sexual wrong doing, brings to light this ominous phenomenon that has afflicted our society and other traditional societies in Arab and Islamic countries without causing as much as a ripple in

the national psyche of these countries.

In the case of Khawla, the father of the murdered girl instigated his son to take the life of his sister in cold blood on the strength of a mere telephone call that Khawla had an illicit relation with a man.

There was no uproar over the case of Khawla just as there was no outcry from either the public or the government when similar crimes were committed over the course of the past years. This suggests that there is a societal acceptance or state tolerance of this evil as necessary since "sexual honour" appears to supersede or preempt all other manifestations of "honour" in Islamic societies.

Even worse, there is an apparent judicial tolerance of such crimes as a recent criminal court decision would demonstrate. Last week the High Criminal Court ruled that a father who killed his daughter to cleanse the family honour is guilty of manslaughter rather than murder and gave the father a mere six months jail sentence. There is a clear signal by the judiciary in the country that crimes committed in the name of family honour would be treated as mere manslaughter.

Would-be killers in such situations are being served with judicial notice that the most that they can expect in terms of punishment is a relatively short jail sentence.

The purpose of this writing is neither to defend extramarital sexual behaviour nor to promote it. The concern is to call for an immediate action by the government and the people of Jordan to stop this

senseless slaughter of girls and women who could be also innocent of the charge arbitrarily levelled against them. Islam per se does not give the immediate family members of any girl or women the right to take her life simply because a father or brother thinks that she has engaged in a sexual wrongdoing. It would have been even less painful had any such girl or women been even given a "family trial" during which she is accorded an opportunity to defend herself against wild accusations or rumours.

Even when a girl or woman is "proven" guilty, neither the Jordanian law nor the various international human rights conventions that Jordan has ratified would tolerate the kind of extrajudicial execution meted to them. This year alone 10 women lost their lives in the name of "family honour." No doubt the death toll in this category of crime will rise to many more before the end of 1994.

So the cycle of violence against unsuspecting girls and women can be projected to continue unabated simply because there is no counter campaign by either the government or by the people.

It appears that the government and the public treat this subject as a hot potato that it would rather not hear about, much less deal with head on, in a manner appropriate to the reputation of the Kingdom as a country well developed and endowed when it comes to human rights and the rule of law. No such reaction appears to be in the cards judging by the length of the crisis and its perpetuation over the past decades. It

seems to me that an initiative on the part of the leadership of the country is called for to stop this senseless killing.

The government can no longer afford to treat this problem as if it is a benign issue better brushed under the carpet. We are treaty-obligated to protect the lives of every life in the country especially the innocent ones.

Life cannot continue to be taken away by arbitrary means in a country as developed and progressive as Jordan.

We are well into the 21st century and it is high time that a national campaign be conducted against this category of crime that is a legacy of the dark era. The ongoing culture of tolerating "family honour" crimes has got to cease by replacing it with other antidotes measures that would satisfy the sense of family honour that Jordanians by and large feel they would wish to defend.

A national pact or social contract on this subject could also be initiated by human rights activists or groups of Jordanians concerned with the development of democracy. A national conference on this subject in which different levels of society could participate could also offer some viable panaceas that could offer Jordanians of all walks of life with an effective formula to deal with such social ills without resorting to summary execution on their own volition. Whatever the case may be, we need to embark on a national course to end the slaughter of our girls and women and at the same time present Jordanians with a just and viable alternative.

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6 Economy

U.S. does not want declining dollar

NEW YORK (R) — U.S. Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen said Sunday that a feeling that Washington was content to see the dollar drop in value was a "misrepresentation."

"There was a misinterpretation that we wanted to see the dollar go down," Mr. Bentsen told an interviewer on "Wall Street Journal Report" on CBS television.

He said the Clinton administration "saw no value in underwriting the dollar..."

While the treasury secretary did not say outright that the administration opposed an increase in interest rates by the Federal Reserve (Fed), the nation's central bank, he told CBS it should be determined "by the market and underlying economic factors."

In answer to a question, he said that he felt short term interest rates would be upon one half per cent by the end of the year to four per cent.

As far as the Federal Reserve's two recent quarter-

point rate increases, Mr. Bentsen said: "We have reached the point where it seems we have reached a point where no good (economic) numbers go unpunished."

On Friday, Mr. Bentsen said he shared the Federal Reserve board's goal of promoting low-inflationary economic growth.

"Let me just say that Alan Greenspan and I share the goal of steady, well-grounded, low inflationary growth," Mr. Bentsen told the Business Council, a meeting of top business executives.

"I think that's what we have, and the Fed is just being cautious to make certain it stays that way," he added.

Financial markets have been on edge, anticipating more interest-rate rises by the U.S. central bank.

Mr. Bentsen acknowledged that long-term interest rates have moved up in the past few months. "But it's worth noting that what's behind rates is growth," he said.

Rabin calls on EU to open up its markets

BONN (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin called on the European Union (EU) to open up the Middle East peace process by opening up its economy to Israel, a German newspaper reported Sunday.

Mr. Rabin said in an interview with the Die Welt daily that EU trade barriers prevented Israeli firms from com-

peting fairly.

"Peace in the region must also provide economic advantages to Israel," the Israeli premier said in the interview due to be published Monday. "We are not asking for membership, but we cannot tolerate the discrimination by the EU."

Mr. Rabin said Israel ran a trade deficit with the EU last

year of \$4.5 billion.

In particular, he noted that Israeli firms had little possibility of bidding for EU government contracts while German and other European firms had complete access to public orders in Israel.

"We are not asking for preferential treatment or European support. We just insist on

EU: S. Africa's creditworthiness to improve

LONDON (R) — South Africa's creditworthiness is likely to improve steadily over the next six to twelve months as a result of the successfully staged first multi-racial elections, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) said Monday.

In its latest country risk re-

view, South Africa's overall rating is expected to move to the top of the "C" category where it will have Greece, Egypt and Uruguay for company.

Currently, South Africa is rated at the same level as India, Hungary and Saudi Ara-

bia.

"A great deal more still needs to be done... and it would be foolish to underestimate the magnitude of the tasks facing the new government," said Andrew Astrow, the EIU's senior economist for sub-Saharan Africa. "South

Africa's future is bright, but the road ahead remains fraught with pitfalls."

In the EIU's quarterly risk ratings, developing and independent countries are rated from "A", the lowest risk, to "E" the highest.

The "A" category currently includes Singapore, Hong Kong and Spain while among the highest risk "E" category can be found Iraq, Yemen and Nicaragua.

The EIU report says the South African elections form the basis for a viable and stable government.

"If a relatively peaceful multi-party political dispensation can be established in the coming months," the report says, "it is entirely possible that South Africa could become the first B-rated country in sub-Saharan Africa."

The EIU's "B" category includes Indonesia, Australia and China.

G.M. to build cars in India

NEW DELHI (R) — U.S. giant General Motors (G.M.) has announced plans to build cars in India in a \$100 million joint venture with domestic producer Hindustan Motors. A joint statement said the plant would produce around 20,000 Astra models of the same kind made by G.M. subsidiaries in Europe. It said production was planned to start in the third quarter of 1995 at an existing Hindustan Motors plant at Halol, near the city of Vadodara in the western state of Gujarat. The statement said the project would create 500 jobs and total investment was expected to be around \$100 million. It gave no details of the division of equity. The joint venture aimed at producing 70 per cent of the car's parts in India within three

years.

The I.B. curriculum starts at the Amman Baccalaureate School in grade 11. It is a very well-organised, two-year, pre-university course of studies preferred by college and university admission offices throughout the world. I.B. courses rely more on analytical and reasoning skills rather than just the knowledge of subject content.

Therefore, ABS is offering this special transitional year to give students a chance to acquire the essential skills in each subject area that will be required for an I.B. programme.

At the completion of this special 'bridge' year students may choose to sit for up to four 'core' IGCSE (Cambridge) examinations including: English, Arabic, Mathematics, and possibly French.

In all other subject areas ABS will be offering appropriate school-based courses that are especially designed to meet both the pre-I.B. as well as Tawjihi equivalence requirements. These subjects will include: Combined Science, History, Geography and Economics, as well as Art, Computer Skills and Religion.

On successful completion of this one year course students will be eligible to enter the two year I.B. programme, or Tawjihi Science stream.

For more information, please contact Mrs. Munira El Jundi, the school registrar, telephone no. 845572, 847191

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Strife undermines Africa's pursuit of reform

NAIROBI (R) — Civil strife and social disorder are dampening prospects for the success of political and economic reforms in Africa, a top Africa, a top African banker said.

"Most countries in the African region are striving to reform their political systems and economic policies," said Wondwossen Kebede, chairman of the governors' board of the Eastern Southern Africa Trade and Development Bank (PTA Bank) Saturday.

"The reforms aim at equitable investment growth and entrepreneurial development and rationalisation of banking systems as well as other instruments deemed appropriate for

enhanced economic growth," Mr. Wondwossen, and Ethiopian, told a meeting of the African Development Bank (AFDB) in Nairobi.

Civil strife in the region had forced the 22-member PTA Bank to abandon construction of its \$8.3 million headquarters in Burundi's capital Bujumbura and move its offices to Nairobi.

Burundi's coffee-based economy has been in ruins due to ethnic strife in the last seven months. Rwanda's economy, also reliant on coffee, has ground to a halt after weeks of slaughter.

Seven of the PTA's mem-

bers such as Sudan, Djibouti and Angola, or the effects of years of strife that have left nations such as Somalia and Mozambique in ruins.

Only the Indian Ocean islands of Mauritius and Seychelles are described as prosperous. Tanzania, Comoros, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Madagascar, Uganda, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe are regarded as bankers as stable.

Elsewhere in Africa, social upheaval or bad policies have hampered economic reform efforts in Liberia and a recent border dispute between Cameroon and Nigeria poses a new threat to stability.

"On the other hand, if the Chinese win MIFN again it will give another huge boost to prices, especially rents," she pointed out.

Mr. Patten admits that housing is the biggest concern for everyone in the territory. So much of Hong Kong's wealth is at stake that Mr. Patten's measures for the frantic property market will be watched as closely as his dealings with China over democracy.

"I think everyone recognises that while we want to damp down the market we don't want to do anything which undermines the fundamentals of the property market," he said during a tour of a housing estate.

"So it is a difficult balance to strike but one which we are determined to get right," the governor explained, deeply aware that he is under the microscope.

If he fails, Mr. Patten — just like juice-seller Chan — will likely find a new squeeze on his fragile position.

Rents put the squeeze on Hong Kong tenants

HONG KONG (AFP) — Chan the juice-seller feels he is having every last pip squeezed out of him by the crazy Hong Kong property market.

He works from dawn until 2.00 a.m. the next morning to pay 36,015 Hong Kong dollars (\$4,620) a month for 10 square feet (0.9 sq. metres) in Cannon Street. He has just enough room to stand behind his tiny counter, named Yiu Hing Loong.

Rents in the Causeway Bay district, where Mr. Chan labours to draw profit from coconuts, kiwis, oranges, mangoes and melons, are already 50 per cent higher than in Tokyo and are the highest in the world, according to real-estate valuers.

Mr. Chan and his three staff need to press around 15,000 oranges a month to keep the landlord happy.

His story is not unusual though. Another small businessman in the Wan Chai district is said to pay 40,000 dollars for an eight-square-foot (0.8-sq-metre) patch.

Plane loads of new expatriates arrive each week to find apartment rents have doubled in 18 months. An average 1,200 sq. feet (108-sq.-metre) flat now goes for 45,000 dollars

(\$5,800) a month. The Richard Ellis company expects rents to rise another 20 per cent in 1994.

Buying a house in the exclusive Peak district on Hong Kong Island is like climbing a financial Everest. Last week, 51 Plantation Road was sold for 267 million Hong Kong dollars (\$42.5 million).

The 14,000 dollars per square foot paid by an unnamed development company was about twice the cost of a view over New York's Central Park from the Trump Tower.

And the two-storey house, formerly used by a Shell oil company executive, is to be demolished. The company plans to put up five 70-million-dollar town houses on the 40,000 sq. feet (3,600-sq.-metre) site, which in any case is shrouded in cloud for much of the year.

There is no shortage of people willing to pay the world's highest rents or stump up a fortune to own a house or apartment on the island.

But the wild Hong Kong property market is causing concern. Governor Chris Patten has promised a special package to dampen down overheated prices next month.

Since he promised action in

Ivory Coast hikes utility charges after devaluation

ABIDJAN (R) — Ivory Coast, which before devaluation had some of the highest utility charges in the world, raised water and electricity tariffs at the weekend.

Government ministers, blaming last January's 50 per cent devaluation of the CFA franc, announced the measures on national television Saturday night and said tariffs would rise 25 per cent — about 25 per cent — less than feared.

Inflation for the rich and expatriates is considerably higher because they are more dependent on imported goods and services.

The government of Prime Minister Daniel Kablan Duncan, which is seeking to restrict salary increases this year to an average 10 per cent, has been shy of announcing regular and annualised inflation statistics.

Under existing rates, owners of homes with swimming pools can easily pay 250,000 CFA per month (\$400) for electricity but Ivoirians living in small homes or flats pay 3,500 CFA (\$6).

France's development agency, the Caisse Francaise de Developpement, said last week inflation in Ivory Coast since January was "about 25 per cent" — less than feared.

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MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Plan how to advance with the assistance of important and clever individuals you know. Strive for happiness in your everyday life.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Arrange to be with friends you truly like for the recreation you desire. Plan the week ahead so that it becomes more productive.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Make plans to improve your status in your line of endeavour. Take time out tonight to charming places which you both will enjoy.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A good day to study whatever is spiritual and educational. Visit friends and relatives and express happiness to those who are very close to you.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Study new methods and ideas that can bring you greater income in the future. Make needed repairs to your property and make it in great shape.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Make the right arrangements for gaining personal aims. The evening is best for being with persons you truly enjoy the company of.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY MAY 16, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The early morning brings all sorts of problems with new interests and individuals that hold you back from making the gains and progress you desire but the evening opens up a positive cycle for your benefit.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Take time for meditation early in the day and adopt the right philosophy for the future. Make this a worthwhile day for you and loved ones.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Study your relationship with friends and know where they fit best in your future plans. Catch up on your rest today and be fresh tomorrow.

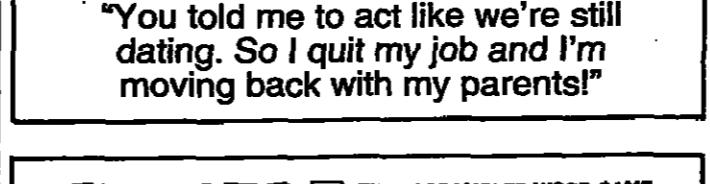
GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Seek the company of influential persons who can be helpful in furthering your career. Devote evening to your loved ones and have more happiness.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Plan how to advance with the assistance of important and clever individuals you know. Strive for happiness in your everyday life.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Study new methods and ideas that can bring you greater income in the future. Make needed repairs to your property and make it in great shape.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Make the right arrangements for gaining personal aims. The evening is best for being with persons you truly enjoy the company of.

THE Better Half By Glasbergen



"You told me to act like we're still dating. So I quit my job and I'm moving back with my parents!"

JUMBLE THAT SCRABBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Miles Argirion

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

LULET
ALAFT
FREEHI
QUAPEL

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: **BLEW HIS STACK**

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumble: **IRATE LOWLY INTAKE ABACUS**

Answer: What the losing gambler did — **BLEW HIS STACK**

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Economy

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Rwanda troops attack rebels in capital

NAIROBI (R) — Rwandan government forces launched attacks against rebel positions around Kigali early Sunday, blitzing the capital with mortar barrages and small arms fire, residents said.

Rebels of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) counter-attacked from hilltop positions surrounding the city and appear to have halted enemy advances near the airport to the east, and around the districts of Rebero and Kicukiro, the residents said.

"There is heavy fighting going on right now and I can hear small arms fire and mortar explosions," one resident told Reuters by phone from the embattled city.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) said it had turned an aircraft heading for the airport back due to the fighting but hoped a second flight would be able to land later in the day.

Kigali was calm Saturday, but fighting has generally been heavy in the city for the past week since RPF forces moved

closer to the key Kanombe government army barracks east of the airport runway.

The mainly Tutsi rebels have seized control of half the tiny country since launching an offensive after President Juvenal Habyarimana was killed in a rocket attack on his plane on April 6, sparking mass killings of Tutsis and opposition Hutus.

Aid workers now estimate 500,000 people have been killed, mostly the victims of radical Hutu death squads rather than casualties from the fighting between rebels and government forces.

Residents said government forces had been using civilians to dig trenches around the Kanombe complex, exposed to rebel artillery from Gasogi Hill to the north, evidently preparing for a ground assault by the RPF.

Government forces have been hit hard by the lack of supplies such as fuel rebels cut major roads to the east and north of the country in the last month.

But travellers to eastern Zaire said the government was flying fresh weapons supplies into the town of Goma and bringing these into the northwestern Rwanda town of Gisenyi.

The U.N. reported heavy fighting taking place near the northern government-held garrison town of Ruhengeri and around Bugesera in the south.

The U.N. Security Council, which is expected to vote on sending a new peacekeeping force to Rwanda Tuesday, is also set to order an arms embargo on the warring parties.

While the U.N. has reached broad agreement on sending about 5,500 African troops, members still have to sort out a disagreement in which the U.N. wants troops to be deployed in border areas whereas the U.N. says they should stay in the city for the past week since RPF forces moved

Blast kills soldier at N. Ireland post

BELFAST (R) — A soldier was fatally wounded by an explosion at a British army checkpoint in a Northern Ireland village late Saturday, police said.

A spokesman said the blast occurred shortly before midnight at the vehicle checkpoint near a police station in the village of Keady, south-west of Belfast near the border with the Irish Republic.

He said the soldier was badly wounded and died soon after.

wards, the first army death in the province this year. The cause of the explosion was not known.

Another man also on duty at the post was unhurt but received treatment for shock.

Reporting from the province, a BBC Radio correspondent said several families who lived nearby were moved out of their homes after the incident and security forces would conduct a security operation in

the area on Sunday morning.

The death brought to 26 the number of people killed this year in violence in Northern Ireland.

The outlawed Irish Republican Army, which draws its support from a section of Northern Ireland's 40 per cent Roman Catholic community, is fighting to end British rule in the province. It faces resistance from Protestant guerrillas.

Blair is favourite to head Britain's Labour

LONDON (R) — British voters clearly back Tony Blair, a young Oxford University-educated lawyer, to lead the main opposition Labour Party into the next election.

Opinion polls in Sunday newspapers showed Mr. Blair had built a healthy lead in the behind-the-scenes battle to succeed John Smith, who died Thursday from a heart attack.

Mr. Blair — telegenic, articulate and expected to appeal to middle-class voters — is the man feared most by the ruling Conservatives. He stands on the right of the Labour Party.

Candidates have agreed not to lobby for the role of "prime minister in waiting" until after Mr. Smith's funeral Friday.

Several Labour politicians have called for a new leader to be elected as soon as possible to maintain the party's political momentum ahead of the next general election, due by mid-1997.

Labour, which shed its image of a disunited party dominated by trade union power under Mr. Smith, holds a 20-point lead over Prime Minister John Major's Conservatives in opinion polls after a series of policy U-turns by the accident-prone ruling party.

All surveys on the Labour leadership showed Mr. Blair as the public's favourite.

Thirty-two per cent of those questioned in a Mori poll published in the Sunday Times supported Mr. Blair, compared with 14 per cent who wanted Margaret Beckett.

Ms. Beckett, deputy leader under Mr. Smith, has taken charge of Labour until the leadership election, almost certainly in July.

Polls in other newspapers showed Gordon Brown, Mr. Blair's friend and fellow right-winger, or John Prescott, a left-winger expected to appeal to traditional Labour voters, in second place well behind Mr. Blair.

However, a poll in the Sunday Express of 150 trade unionists entitled to vote in the leadership election revealed Mr. Blair, the "shadow" interior minister, had double the support of Mr. Prescott.

The former Soviet Republic has been racked by unrest since gaining independence in



Bakili Muluzi, leader of the Malawi United Democratic Front (UDF) opposition party, waves to supporters campaigning for Tuesday's presidential runoff. Observers give Mr. Muluzi a chance to upset President Kamuzu Banda, ending his 30-year rule (AFP photo)

Malawians pray for peace ahead of poll

BLANTYRE, Malawi (R) — Millions of Malawians jammed churches Sunday to pray for peace as campaigning closed for elections likely to unseat President Kamuzu Banda, supreme ruler of the country for 30 years.

With campaigning for Tuesday's ballot officially closed, state radio devoted its Sunday morning programmes to prayers for a peaceful poll, Malawi's first pluralist elections since independence from Britain in 1964.

Local journalists said churches of all denominations across the central African nation of 9.7 million were full, with church leaders urging calm and restraint.

Political analysts say Mr. Banda, the iron-fisted ruler who brooked no opposition during his one-party rule of 30 years, was likely to be ousted from power by rebels who quit or were sacked from his Malawi Congress Party (MCP).

Mr. Banda, believed to be in his 90s and unwell since he underwent brain surgery in South Africa last year, mustered only 5,000 people at national celebrations marking his official birthday of 88.

His MCP, which appears to have gained some lost ground

in the last weeks of campaigning, warned voters not to elect the UDF, saying this could plunge Malawi into darkness.

"The votes cast will determine whether we march forward into sunlight and a better future or slide backwards into darkness with those who would destroy our unity and deny us progress," said the Malawi News, organ of Mr. Banda's party.

"Use your vote wisely. Vote for Kamuzu, vote for the MCP," it said in a special edition published Saturday.

The Malawi News named no names clearly pointed its guns at Mr. Muluzi, 51, who served a jail term in the 1960s for stealing state funds while he was an employee of the Ministry of Justice.

Two other opposition parties are contesting the polls in which 177 parliamentary seats and the presidency are at stake, but analysts give them little chance.

Journalist voted new Oxford poetry professor

LONDON (R) — War correspondent and columnist James Fenton was elected Oxford University's new professor of poetry. Prof. Fenton, 45, currently a columnist for Britain's Independent newspaper, beat three other candidates for the largely ceremonial post which has been in existence for 200 years. The new professor succeeds Irish poet Seamus Heaney and follows in the footsteps of famous names such as Matthew Arnold, C. Day-Lewis, W.H. Auden and Robert Graves. The five-year job carries an annual salary of £4,059 (\$6,079) but the duties are not heavy. The professor is expected to give three lectures a year, judge poetry competitions and make a speech honouring the university's benefactors. Prof. Fenton, a graduate of Oxford's Magdalen College and a runner-up to Heaney in the 1984 election, has been a war correspondent, drama critic and columnist. He also worked on early lyrics for the hit musical *Les Misérables*. His poetry includes work inspired by the scenes witnessed in his reporting.

Alain Delon operated for hernia

PARIS (AFP) — French film heartthrob Alain Delon, 58, has had an operation for a hernia. His film producer friend Norbert Satho said Saturday Delon, whose screen career spans more than three decades, starred in films including *Is Paris Burning* in 1965, and more recently *"Un Amour De Swann"* in 1984. He was admitted Tuesday after complaining of stomach pains.

Cubans plan to reopen Sloppy Joe's Bar

HAVANA (R) — Havana's famous Sloppy Joe's Bar is to reopen a quarter century after it closed. Cuban tourist officials said Saturday, Sloppy Joe's was a must for Americans visiting Havana the forties and fifties. A visit to the bar celebrities was de rigueur and non-celebrities flocked there to see them. It wasn't high class. Shapely prostitutes who looked like they were painted into their dresses hung out there, and Sloppy Joe's didn't serve fancy food but boasted one of the best sandwiches in town — inch-thick ham and cheese on rye. The bartenders, masters of the trade, prepared multi-coloured planter's punch and snow-white daiquiris. With the advent of the Cuban Revolution, Sloppy Joe's became an anachronism, and American and other foreign tourists disappeared after the United States cut links with Havana in 1960. The revolution had other priorities, and Sloppy Joe's was neglected and finally closed down. The big doors were shut but the long, single mahogany-top bar remained and so did the showcases full of photographs. There are still photos of some of its famous customers — the heavyweight boxing champ, Joe Louis, dashing Errol Flynn, alluring Ava Gardner, and adolescent-looking Frank Sinatra. Also, a Guinness photo is there because scenes from *Our Man In Havana* were filmed in the bar. Now with the rise in international tourism, there are plans to renovate and reopen the bar.

S. African Airways goes multi-lingual

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Passengers travelling South African Airways (SAA) will face a barrage of greetings in at least four languages, in keeping with the new South Africa, the national carrier said in a statement Saturday. In the bad old days of apartheid South Africa, travellers on SAA were addressed in two languages, Afrikaans first and then English. From Saturday, four days after Nelson Mandela's inauguration as the country's first democratically-elected president, passengers will be greeted in English first, then Afrikaans, then Zulu and Sotho. And on international flights, "a greeting appropriate to the country of destination or origin" as well, SAA said in a statement. "It is important that SAA be accepted by its diverse passengers," SAA chief executive Mike Myburgh said in the statement. "We are excited about the rebirth of a new South Africa and we must project ourselves with the evident change and with international acceptance now that we have become part of the world market again." SAA was also busy scrapping the old orange, blue and white South African flag off all its aircraft and replacing it with the new, predominantly black, green and gold one.

Taiwan continues China boycott, urges new talk

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan said it would maintain its boycott on group tours to China after its fence-mending team failed to clarify doubts about the boat fire that killed 24 Taiwanese tourists there.

Yen Chin-Feng, vice chairman of the cabinet's Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) which formulates policies toward China, told reporters a boycott on China tours and a suspension of bilateral exchanges would continue after the return of the fact-finding delegation.

Taiwan also repeated its request to hold a new round of talks with Beijing on safety for travellers.

The delegation, comprising forensic experts, retired police officers and relatives of Taiwanese victims, ended a one-week visit in China Saturday. It said it did not get answers to more than 200 questions about the March 31 deaths of the 24 Taiwanese on a pleasure boat on Qiantao Lake in China's coastal Zhejiang province.

"We were not there to handle the case, but neither were we with our eyes closed, listening to what mainland China claimed as the truth," delegation head Shi Hwei-Yow told

Senators: Crucial part of Clinton health reform dead

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (R) — A key Republican senator said Saturday that a crucial part of President Bill Clinton's health reform plan requiring employers to pay most of their workers' health insurance will not pass Congress.

"I am afraid the mandate is dead," Senator Bob Packwood, an Oregon Republican, told reporters.

President Clinton had proposed the so-called employer mandate as a way to provide health care benefits for the 39 million Americans who lack insurance.

Mr. Clinton proposed that employers pay 80 per cent of the cost while workers pay the rest. Mr. Clinton threatened to veto any legislation that does not guarantee health benefits to all Americans.

But the mandate issue has run into stiff opposition from small business, and members of the National Federation of Independent Business have been lobbying lawmakers hard against the proposed mandate.

Some lawmakers have suggested requiring individuals to buy health insurance, but Sen. Packwood said that idea had not enough support in Congress to be enacted either.

Clinton is now drafting its version of Mr. Clinton's health care reform plan. All sides acknowledge that support from Republicans is essential in the Senate where they have enough votes to block any plan they do not like.

Republicans have been strongly opposed to elements of Mr. Clinton's plan, including employer mandates, and

Big blast rips through Georgia theatre

MOSCOW (Agencies) — A powerful blast ripped through a theatre in the Georgian capital Tbilisi Sunday and it seemed likely there had been casualties.

Police in other newspapers showed Gordon Brown, Mr. Blair's friend and fellow right-winger, or John Prescott, a left-winger expected to appeal to traditional Labour voters, in second place well behind Mr. Blair.

However, a poll in the Sunday Express of 150 trade unionists entitled to vote in the leadership election revealed Mr. Blair, the "shadow" interior minister, had double the support of Mr. Prescott.

The former Soviet Republic has been racked by unrest since gaining independence in

1991.

Government troops fought an unsuccessful year-long war against separatists in the breakaway Black Sea region of Abkhazia and last year only

just managed to put down a rebellion by supporters of former President Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

Georgian and Abkhazian authorities signed an agreement Saturday on a ceasefire and deployment of an intervention force in the troubled separatist republic, the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

The accord, signed by both sides under mediation from Moscow, would "prevent the

resumption of military action and facilitate the return of (Georgian) refugees to their homes," the ITAR-TASS agency quoted the ministry as saying.

The agency gave no other details on the mechanics of the accord, but sources close to the negotiations said disagreements remained over the future status of Abkhazia and conditions covering refugees, with the separatists only willing to accept the return of Georgians who took part in the fighting.

The accord, signed a day after the Georgian parliament refused to ratify the accord.

Settlements (Habitat) notes that most agencies are continuing with established work priorities. The centre recommends that the commission consider financial incentives to reward multi-agency programmes in support of Agenda 21. This would encourage inter-agency cooperation, joint programming and the pooling of resources, and would also prevent duplication.

Climate change and biodiversity conventions, the two legal agreements opened for signature in Rio, have both entered into force — an unprecedented pace for international law.

The Framework Convention on Climate Change, which aims to prevent global warming and climate change, became legally binding on March 21, 1994 and has been ratified by 71 countries. Developed country commitments under the treaty — and the effectiveness of efforts to limit greenhouse gas emissions — will be reviewed in March 1995 when the conference of parties, responsible for overseeing implementation of the convention, holds its first session in Berlin.

The U.N. Centre for Human

Sports

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rominger wins Tour of Spain

MADRID (R) — Switzerland's Toni Rominger won a record third consecutive Tour of Spain, finishing ahead overall after the 3,568-kilometre 21-stage race which ended in Madrid Sunday. Spain's Mikel Zarzbeitia and Pedro Delgado were second and third overall respectively. The final 166-kilometre stage from Segovia was won by Laurent Jalabert of France.

Turtle streaks to victory

DUBLIN (AFP) — Turtle Island swept to a convincing 15-length victory in the Irish 2,000 Guineas at the Curragh Sunday, just a week after being narrowly beaten in France's mile Classic. Settled in last place by John Reid, Turtle Island cruised up to the leaders two furlongs out. Guided Tour caught Ridgewood Ben for second on the line. Trainer Peter Chapple-Hyam said: "He didn't get the rub of the green in France and perhaps I had been too easy on him. I knew he would come on for the race. But he is some horse — as good as I have ever trained."

North Flight wins Tokyo race

TOKYO (AFP) — North Flight with Kouichi Tsunoda in the saddle led a Japanese one-two finish with Towa Darling to win the 1,600-metres (one mile) Yasuda Memorial race here Sunday. The four-year-old bay filly got ahead in the final furlong and crossed the finishing line in one minute 33.2 seconds, two lengths and a half ahead of Towa Darling. French colt Dolphin Street, ridden by American Cash Asmussen, came third followed by Japan's Sakura Bakushin in fourth on the rainy Tokyo Racecourse. Pre-race favourite Ski Paradise, the winner at the Keio Spring Cup three weeks ago, could not keep the momentum as the French filly finished fifth with top Japanese jockey Yuraka Take in the saddle.

Yoma stops British challenger

CAYENNE, French Guiana (AFP) — France's Jacobin Yoma kept his European Boxing Union super-featherweight title here Saturday night after stopping British challenger Neil Haddock in the seventh round. Haddock's corner threw in the towel after their man was comprehensively outpunched by the 28-year-old Frenchman fighting before his home crowd. The Englishman had also suffered badly from the stifling heat. Yoma was making the third defence of a title he won in June, 1993 with a points win here over Dutchman Regilio Tuur.

Rattanapol retains IBF title

BANGKOK (AFP) — Thailand's Rattanapol Sor Vorapin retained his International Boxing Federation (IBF) straw-weight title Saturday after knocking out challenger Roger Espanola. Rattanapol floored the ninth-ranked Filipino in the sixth round of the scheduled 12-round bout in the central Thai province of Saraburi.

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GETTING TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♦ J 8 6
♦ Q 7 2
♦ A K Q 6 3 2
♦ 8

WEST
♦ 9 4
♦ A J 8
10 7 4
♦ A 9 8 6 4 3

EAST
♦ 10 7
♦ 8 5
♦ Q 10 5 2
♦ 10 5 3
♦ J 9
♦ K J

SOUTH
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Ace of ♦

You are beginning to master the art of defense when you see the need to switch the attack to a particular suit. You have mastered it when you can select the correct card in the suit to lead.

North-South conducted a routine auction to what turned out to be a shaky game because of the wasted values in clubs. Make the king of clubs the king of hearts and the

contract would be laydown. With nothing in the auction to act as a guide, West chose to fire away with the ace of clubs. The sight of dummy made two things obvious: There was no future in a club continuation; and unless the defenders could score some tricks in a hurry, the contract would be easy, since the diamond suit offered a rich source of tricks.

It did not take a genius to work out that the only suit that offered prospects of tricks was hearts. So West shifted to the ace of hearts and continued with the jack in the hope of finding partner with the K 10. Declaler covered with the table's queen and the defenders were limited to two heart tricks and a club.

West's analysis was on the right track, but did not go far enough. The contract could be defeated if East held either the 10 or 9 of hearts in addition to the king. As long as West shifted to the jack of hearts at trick two.

Declaler must cover and East captures the queen with the king. When a heart is returned, declarer's 10 is trapped by West's A 8. Down one!

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Dolph Lundgren & George Segal
in
JOSHUA TREE
"Forced Vengeance"
Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

Schumacher captures Monaco Grand Prix

MONACO (AFP) — Germany's Michael Schumacher swept to his fourth victory of the Formula One season here Sunday in a Monaco Grand Prix which was won and lost within the opening seconds.

Schumacher, who has won every race this year, came home clear of Britain's Martin Brundle in the McLaren-Peugeot and Austrian veteran Gerhard Berger in the Ferran.

The race, still overshadowed by Formula One's recent tragedies, made a dramatic start when Damon Hill's Williams-Renault shunted into the back of the other McLaren, driven by Mika Hakkinen, forcing both men out.

The low-speed accident came just after the green light as both men plunged into the first bend after Schumacher in the Benetton-Ford.

Drivers, officials and motorsport fans had been praying for an accident-free race on this relatively slow street circuit, following Karl Wendlinger's crash here on Thursday which has left the Austrian in a deep coma.

The legendary race is also the first since Hill's teammate Ayrton Senna and Roland Ratzenberger were killed in crashes at the San Marino

Grand Prix two weeks ago. Schumacher, now almost certain to win this year's world championship, led from start to finish while the two Ferrans of Berger and Jean Alesi scrapped with Christian Fittipaldi in the Footwork-Ford in the early stages.

With so few opportunities to overtake on the winding streets of the Principality, the places tended to change only with pit-stops for refuelling or a retirement with mechanical problems.

Among those challengers to follow by the wayside were Britain's Mark Blundell in the Tyrrell-Yamaha and Brazilian Rubens Barrichello in the Jordan-Hart.

Blundell's bad luck was also shared by Berger, whose car spun round after hitting a patch of oil left by the blown engine of the Englishman's Tyrrell, costing him a second place.

By the halfway stage, Schumacher was half a minute clear of Brundle, with Berger third and Alesi fourth. Fittipaldi's charge ended with two thirds of the race gone when he retired, thereby bringing Barrichello's Italian teammate Andrea de Cesaris into the fray.

Jazz take 3-0 lead; Pacers pound Hawks

DENVER (R) — The Utah Jazz, led by their brilliant backcourt duo, beat the Denver Nuggets 111-109 in overtime Saturday to take a commanding three games to none lead in their Western Conference semifinal series.

John Stockton scored Utah's last six points in overtime and combined with fellow-guard Jeff Hornacek to score all but two of the Jazz total in the extra period.

In the Eastern Conference semifinals at Indianapolis, the top-seeded Atlanta Hawks were routed 101-81 by the Indiana Pacers, who took a two-games to one lead in their series.

Indiana rebounded from an all-time NBA playoff low of 69 points in a loss to the Hawks in Atlanta Thursday. Center Rik Smits led the way with 27 points, 18 in the first half.

Hornacek led the Jazz with 27 points, including five in overtime. Stockton finished with 24 points to help bring Utah within one win of reaching the conference finals for only the second time in franchise history.

"We're thinking 'next game' now," said Stockton. "A sweep I don't know about. I don't care if we win by 20, by one, or by one-half. Denver won't give up. They are a hungry and talented team."

"I think Utah may be the smartest team in the NBA," said Nuggets coach Dan Issel. "It takes them one trip down the floor to figure out adjustments. Stockton and Hornacek are so smart and they don't turn the ball over."

Hornacek's three-point jumper with 1:40 left in overtime gave Utah a 105-102 lead. After a basket by Denver's Laphonso Ellis, Stockton hit a jumper to restore the three-point edge.

The Nuggets pulled within 107-106 when Mahmoud Abdul Rauf hit an off-balance shot with 42 seconds left. Stockton again buried a jumper with 30.2 seconds left.

Abdul Rauf answered with a basket five seconds later to bring Denver within a point yet again at 109-108.

Stockton was fouled and converted both free throws with 9.2 seconds left to make it 111-108. Denver's Rodney Rogers was fouled attempting a three-pointer with 4.8 seconds remaining. He hit the first free throw and intentionally missed the second but Denver grabbed the rebound.

The Jazz forced the overtime when Karl Malone hit a 22-foot jumper with 9.2 seconds left in regulation to tie the game at 98-98. Malone, who fouled out in the final seconds of overtime, had 26 points and 13 rebounds.

"You have to give Denver an awful lot of credit," said Malone. "They played their butts off."

The Nuggets had a chance to win in the closing seconds of regulation, but Robert Pack missed a short jumper in the lane.

Ellis scored 18 of his 25 points in the fourth quarter and overtime to lead Denver. Abdul Rauf and Dikembe Mutombo had 20 points apiece for the Nuggets.

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Graf wins Berlin Open

BERLIN (AFP) — Steffi Graf retained her German Open title — her eighth in nine years — with a 7-6 (8/6) 6-4 victory over Brenda Schultz here Sunday.

It was Graf's 20th consecutive final since March 1993, and her 16th victory — and ample warning to her rivals a week before the French Open.

For Schultz it was the biggest final of her career, and her serve, the fastest in women's tennis, forced several errors from Graf.

But the world number one

was quicker around court and made less unforced errors. She failed to break, however, during the first set, with Schultz having the best chance at 3-3 when she took Graf to deuce.

A backhand in the net and a wide return let Graf off the hook that time before Schultz survived a similar slalom at 6-5 with an ace to take early control in the following tiebreak.

The Dutch girl's 3-0 lead was pegged back to 4-4 before Schultz missed a set point at 6-5 by netting a backhand.

That gave Graf the chance to produce a perfect backhand return down the line to take the set and she broke for a 2-1 lead in the second, a lead she never lost.

Graf received a cheque for \$150,000, and 11th seeded Schultz receiving \$60,000.

Stockton was fouled and converted both free throws with 9.2 seconds left to make it 111-108. Denver's Rodney Rogers was fouled attempting a three-pointer with 4.8 seconds remaining. He hit the first free throw and intentionally missed the second but Denver grabbed the rebound.

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Sampras crushes Becker in the Italian Open final

ROME (R) — World number one Pete Sampras took the Italian Open title when he condemned triple Wimbledon champion Boris Becker to a humiliating 6-1, 6-2, 6-2 defeat Sunday.

Playing his first clay court tournament of the season, Sampras took his winning streak to 27 matches as Becker's game came apart at the seams.

The German, who has never won a title on clay, needed to be at his best if he were to deny Sampras a seventh title this year but consistently failed to land his first service in.

Sampras, seeking to play his way into form on his least favourite surface ahead of the French Open which begins May 23, gave Becker no respite after racing into a 5-0 lead and taking the first set in 35 minutes.

He broke Becker again in the opening game of the second set and repeated the

trick in the seventh game of another set lasting little over half an hour.

Becker, shouting at himself in anger and frustration, lost his serve again in the first game of the final set and there was no way back on the hottest day in Rome this year.

Sampras' performance — giving him only the second title of his career on clay — was ideal preparation for Roland Garros where he will seek to become the first man since Rod Laver in 1969 to win four successive Grand Slam titles.

"He was making mistakes left and right and I just tried to keep the ball in play," Sampras said.

"I struggled a little bit earlier in the week but now I feel confident, going into the French Open. I feel pretty good about my tennis," added Sampras with typical understatement after his win in one hour 52 minutes.

Becker, who enjoyed great

backing from the Roman fans at the Foro Italico, was philosophical in defeat.

"I didn't expect to make the final in this tournament but with the fans' help I had one of my best clay court tournaments ever," he said.

"I'm only sorry that I didn't give a better Sunday afternoon."

Becker will be wondering how he managed to land only just over one-third of his first services in after serving 14 aces.

It was his fourth clay court final and all had ended in defeat. "I woke up this morning feeling tired. This was perhaps one match too many for me this week."

He will be consoled by a runners-up cheque for \$147,000 and enough ranking points to restore him to the top 10 for the first time since November last year.

Werder, Auxerre win cup titles; Barcelona snatch Spanish league

Agencies

FAVOURITES Werder Bremer lifted the German Cup here by beating second division SpVgg Rot-Weiss 3-1 Saturday in Berlin.

Last year's Bundesliga champions, who finished an disappointing eighth this season, salvaged their campaign after forgoing 2-0 clear by the break through Dietmar Beiersdorfer (17th minute) and Austrian Andreas Herzog (38th).

Kiwi Wynton Rufer sealed the win with a penalty after Rott-Weiss had pulled a goal back after 50 minutes.

Bremen, the 1992 European Cup winners, have reached the German final four times in five years and

won the trophy in 1991, 30 years after their only other triumph.

Meanwhile, Auxerre, the little Burgundy club which launched Eric Cantona's career, won their first major trophy when they beat Montpellier 3-0 in the French Cup final Saturday.

Montpellier, fielding a young side with seven players aged 23 or under and no survivors from the 1990 team, fought gamely but were no match for a well-drilled Auxerre outfit.

In Madrid, Deportivo Coruna missed a penalty a minute before the end of their last match of the season to hand a fourth consecutive Spanish League championship to Barcelona Saturday.

Frank McLintock, who left Leicester for Arsenal in 1964, had, by 1971, developed into a fine international defender and an inspiring leader.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Gazans now face more bureaucracy

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (AFP) — After years of struggling with the occupying army to obtain passes to enter Israel, Gazans learned Sunday they would now have to go through the new Palestinian police first. "Requests will have to be made in our offices for our approval and then be handed on to the Israeli army for their approval," a senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official told AFP. Palestinians were not looking forward to the double procedure. "Before I used to call the military administration and an army patrol would accompany the Israeli lorry carrying gas bottles to my factory in Deir Al Balah," said factory owner Mohammad Al Tilbani. However, since Palestinian police took charge of the area last week the deliveries have had to stop. "So now I have to go and fetch gas myself from Israel. But when I called the military administration, I was told from now on to go through the Palestinian police. I made my request but they told me they were too busy deploying policemen in different barracks and to come back tomorrow. I don't know how they will function in the future, all I know is that I have 85 workers who have nothing to do and a Muslim holiday starts on Saturday. If we don't work now, people will buy Israeli cakes and our economy will collapse."

Vehicles for Palestinian police reach Egypt

PORT SAID (R) — Dozens of U.S. trucks and jeeps donated to Palestinian police to help them maintain order in Gaza and Jericho arrived in Egypt on Sunday, officials said. They said the 176 vehicles were unloaded at Port Said from containers and handed over to Egyptian authorities, who will deliver them to the Palestinian police force. Palestinian officials in Cairo said the vehicles would be sent immediately to the self-rule areas of Gaza and Jericho, but their deployment had to be coordinated with the entry of Palestinian police arriving from bases in Yemen and Libya. Palestinian police have already assumed responsibility for law and order in the West Bank town of Jericho and are taking over in stages in the Gaza Strip. The United States airlifted the first batch of 24 vehicles last month to help meet the immediate needs of the police force. The total U.S. donation comprises 100 pick-up trucks, 50 utility vehicles and 50 two-and-a-half-tonne trucks. Another 56 vehicles donated by Greece are expected in Egypt within the next few days.

Yasser Arafat to visit Norway

OSLO (R) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat will attend a ceremony on Wednesday honouring Norway for its role in brokering the historic Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace accord, the foreign ministry said on Sunday. Israeli Television reported that Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres would also attend the ceremony in Norway, hosted by the Carter-Menil Human Rights Foundation. On Wednesday the foundation, set up by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and Dominique de Menil, will unveil a sculpture dedicated to the Norwegian people and hand a cheque of \$100,000 to the Norwegian Institute of Applied Social Science.

Libyans on camel-back join Mecca pilgrims

JEDDAH (AFP) — Some 400 Libyan Muslims have arrived on camel-back in Tabuk, northwest Saudi Arabia, for the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. The Organisation of the Islamic Conference said here Sunday. The caravan of 350 camels was welcomed at the Saudi border by Tabuk leaders who helped to arrange the trip. The pilgrims decided to travel to Islam's holiest sites by camel to protest the U.N. air embargo on Libya imposed in April 1992 after Tripoli refused to hand over suspects in bombings of U.S. and French airliners. They left Libya in April and crossed through Egypt and Jordan before arriving in Saudi Arabia. From Tabuk, they left for Medina and Mecca, again by camel. Almost one million pilgrims from across the world have already arrived in Mecca for the pilgrimage, the highpoint of which will be on Friday when they climb Mount Arafat, the official Saudi agency SPA said Sunday. Last year more than two million people took part in the pilgrimage.

Mutual respect basis for stand on self-rule —Hamas

By Marwan M. Shabani
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has announced it will respect the authority of the Palestinian National Security Forces (PNSF) and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) as long as the two bodies respect the rights and freedoms of groups which oppose the peace process, a leading spokesman of Hamas said Sunday.

"We will respect and show reasonable cooperation with the PNSF and the PNA provided that they respect the rights and freedoms of all Palestinians regardless of their political affiliation," Ibrahim Ghosheh, the Jordan-based spokesman of Hamas, told the Jordan Times.

Hamas regards the PNSF as a Palestinian police force while it considers the PNA, still being formed by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, to be a Fatah-dominated group of leaders.

"The police force represents all the Palestinians. Every policeman has a brother or cousin who is Hamas, or belongs to one of the opposition groups. Thus this police force is 'ours' so to speak," said Mr. Ghosheh in an interview in his Abdali office.

Toning down rhetoric, Mr. Ghosheh said that Hamas members and supporters would continue to "fight" the Israeli occupation but "could" do so in the confides of popular resistance through "speeches and rallies," if "reasonable behaviour towards the Palestinian resistance by the Palestinian authorities" would create a positive atmosphere in Gaza and Jericho.

But, according to Mr. Ghosheh, Hamas "will not continue to target Israeli civilians as it did in attacks on Israeli buses in Afula and Hadera, following the Hebron massacre."

The circumstance of Afula and Hadera were different from the ones surrounding our usual resistance against the occupation. Israel hit our people as they knelt for prayer. They had to feel the pain that we felt; to know that this is wrong," Mr. Ghosheh said.

"Our targets have almost been soldiers or illegal settlers; and they will continue to be our primary targets," added Mr. Ghosheh.

King and Queen visit Jubilee School

AMMAN (J.T.) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor on Sunday visited the Jubilee School, as its first year was coming to a close, to congratulate the first class of pioneering students.

The Jubilee School is an independent four-year, co-educational secondary school for outstanding scholarship students from rural and urban areas. The Jubilee School Project was announced in 1977 as a tribute to King Hussein's development efforts, especially in the field of education. In 1984, Queen Noor accepted a request by the prime minister to assume responsibility for the project, and in 1985, when the Noor Al Hussein Foundation was established, the school became one of its priority projects.

The Jubilee School is dedicated to the development of the intellect and leadership potential of Jordanian students with special emphasis on students from underprivileged areas of the country.

In the future, the school will offer boarding facilities and it will be opened to outstanding

students from other Arab countries. The school helps set national standards of excellence in education by providing its students with a highly trained staff, modern laboratories, workshops and classrooms, and career counselling and community service opportunities. The school's innovative educational approach encourages the students' active and creative involvement in all aspects of their education. Classes emphasise discussion and debate of social, political and global issues.

The school's Centre for Excellence in Education carries out research, conducts public and private teacher training programmes and workshops, and produces educational material to help meet the needs of exceptional students in their regular classrooms. This centre cooperates with the Ministry of Education to transfer the Jubilee School experience to other schools in Jordan. It is hoped that the school's graduating students will return to their local communities after further training or higher education to assume



Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor, accompanied by Prime Minister Abdin Salam Majali, Sunday visit the Jubilee School (Petra photo)

leadership roles.

King Hussein and Queen Noor also visited the school's computer laboratory and library

and science laboratory. Receiving the King and Queen were Prime Minister Abdin Salam Majali, Senator Leila Sharaf, Dr. Bassam Al Saket, Mrs. Nour Izzedine and Dr. Fathi Jarwan, director of the school.

King sends message to Tunisia

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Sataan Al Hassan arrived in Tunis on Sunday on a three-day official visit.

Mr. Hassan will meet with Tunisian President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali to convey to him a written message from His Majesty King Hussein.

Mr. Hassan said he will also meet with other Tunisian officials for talks.

Britain says it always urged end to Aqaba siege

AMMAN — Britain did not take part in the U.S.-led blockade of Aqaba and had always urged its allies to end the inspection of ships in the Gulf of Aqaba, James Watt, the charge d'affaires at the British embassy, said Sunday.

"My country has always been pressing for the ban to be lifted," Mr. Watt told a business luncheon.

On April 25, the United States said it has accepted a Jordanian proposal on a new

land-based system for verifying compliance with the international sanctions, and His Majesty King Hussein said the Aqaba siege was being lifted, after meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in London.

Mr. Christopher told reporters at a joint press conference with King Hussein that the U.S. had accepted the proposal to have the London-based Lloyds Register verify Aqaba-bound cargo once it is unloaded in the port instead of the sea-inspections, which

enormous economic losses. The American decision was followed by a French announcement it was withdrawing from the international forces inspecting the Aqaba-bound shipping.

The U.S. confirmation that the siege was being lifted came on May 9, when Washington officially informed Jordan of its acceptance of the Kingdom's proposal.

"We were never part of the inspection groups, and Britain never supported the inspection from the beginning," Mr. Watt said.

Addressing a group of business people, Mr. Watt said the new process was a sign of optimism for the Jordanian economy, adding that Jordan has become a market which all industries are looking at.

"We are beginning to see some signs of hope after the peace process, and people are looking towards a bright future, making Jordan a very attractive market," he added.

Mr. Watt said Britain's policy was to encourage the Jordanian market, and to open up other markets in the region, "including Israel."

Poets and writers fight over possible 'normalisation' of Arab-Israeli relations 8 political parties join the fray

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A war of words is being fought in Jordanian intellectual circles over the ramifications of making peace with Israel especially on Arab culture and identity.

Since the Madrid conference of October 1991 and more recently the signing of the Oslo accord in September 1993, many writers, in anticipation of or in reaction to developments of the Arab-Israeli peace process, have been incessantly warning of the dangers of "normalisation" on Arab culture and identity.

While many outspoken Jordanian writers say that relations with Israel, particularly cultural ties, should not be "normalised," even if and when formal peace is achieved, the public at large is at a loss over what "normalisation" means.

For the "rejectionist" writers, normalisation, or the process of transforming confrontation with an enemy state into neighbourly ties, has become a key word to differentiate between a "partner" and a "traitor."

During recent elections of professional unions and writers' associations, daily and weekly columnists tried to influence the outcome of the polls by labelling candidates as pro- or anti-normalisation.

Forewarning of an "imminent Zionist cultural invasion," those writers threw their weight behind what they regarded as the anti-normalisation candidates.

The other side, those who believed in a just peace settlement with Israel were hardly saying a word. Their reaction to the campaigns was generally weak and fragmented, thus enabling the hardliners to win their electioneering battles.

But it was not until a prominent Arab writer and poet, Adonis, who is accused of promoting normalisation thinking, was invited to the upcoming Jerash Festival that a lively debate was sparked over whether opening channels of dialogue with Israeli intellectuals can be considered as normalisation or not.

In a statement issued last month, General Union of Arab Writers (GUAW) President Fakhri Kawar, a former Jordanian deputy, called on the organisers of the festival to reverse its decision to in-

vite Adonis because of his "pro-normalisation" stand.

"Inviting Adonis to the Jerash Festival means supporting a poet who is contributing to a poet who is contributing to the normalisation process," Mr. Kawar's statement said.

Mr. Kawar, a leftist who lost his bid for reelection to the Lower House of Parliament last November, asked writers and journalists to boycott Adonis on the ground that the Syrian poet, whose real name is Ali Ahmad Sa'eed, gave an interview to the enemy's newspaper, met with Israeli writers in Granada, Spain and had written an article in the London-based Al Quds newspaper in which he expressed his anger over U.S. prostration in launching a war against Iraq.

"(These acts) are in contradiction with Arab writers' efforts to combat cultural normalisation with the enemy," the statement said.

At about the same time Mr. Kawar issued his call, the Jordanian Engineers Association (JEA) issued a similar statement condemning the invitation to Adonis and described it as a provocative step against the public's feelings.

The JEA's statement charged that the Adonis invitation was a deliberate action taken to undermine what the association's president, Leith Shbeilat, saw as the Jordanian public's rejection of normalisation.

"The original concept behind such a festival is to enhance and deepen cultural belonging that is in line with the nation's principles and the homeland's dignity," Mr.

Shbeilat's statement said. "It is a well-known fact that this poet is promoting normalisation with the Zionist enemy and had already met with Zionist writers in the cultural Granada meeting."

On behalf of the Jordanian Engineers Association, Mr. Shbeilat, a former deputy and president of the newly founded Anti-Zionism Society, condemned the invitation and called on the organisers to take the appropriate measures to cancel it.

Those writers rose to the defence of Adonis argued that opening channels of dialogue with their Israeli counterparts should not be considered as normalisation.

What is really considered as normalisation and is threatening the Arab culture and identity, they believe, is the modification of Jordanian school curricula that formal peace is widely expected to introduce into Arab countries' pedagogic systems.

In a recent article entitled "For the sake of freedom of expression and creativity and not for the sake of defending Adonis," Taher Riad, a prominent poet, argued that the reasons listed by the Adonis' statements to boycott Adonis were mere allegations and cannot be considered as normalisation.

Mr. Riad called on Arab intellectuals to rise to the confrontation of the real dangers that are threatening Arab culture and identity instead of wasting their time on issues of minor importance.

"Why don't they (writers) save their efforts and start preparing for the confrontation of the real normalisation

which will involve the modification of the school curriculum and media campaign that will follow?" he asked.

Another writer, Fakhri Saleh, also criticised the controversy over Adonis, but stressed the need to draw up effective cultural policies to confront any Israeli cultural invasion against the Arabs.

"It is not possible that a great Arab poet's name should be ignored just because he attended the Granada conference or any other conference," Mr. Saleh said. "If we were against normalisation then we should draw up a clear programme against it and discuss with Adonis and others how to fortify the region against falling prey to the Israeli monstrosity."

Mr. Saleh went on to criticise Arab intellectuals who are using cultural issues to advance their political agendas, saying that this amounted to cultural terrorism that will have its negative implications on the progress of the Arab countries as a whole.

"This cultural terrorism generates another cultural terrorism that will become an oppressive instrument on creativity which is dangerous to the development of the societies and can lead to catastrophes," he warned.

Although they projected different analyses of the future cultural policies, Arab countries should adopt writers who share Mr. Saleh's viewpoint contended that the real ailment of Arab countries is the absence of clear and progressive Arab cultural policies.

"The real danger to the Arab spirit, personality and

culture is the absence of Arab cultural policies," writer Ibrahim Abasi said. "The elite and the intellectuals should be at the avant-garde of drafting national and progressive cultural policies that is solid in nature and can confront looming dangers."

Nationalist writer Hayat Attiyeh said: "Not the Arab writers union and not all of the Arabs can stop cultural invasions... but each of us (writers) should form lobbying groups by themselves to upgrade the local performance in a way that would make us immune from these invasions."

Another writer, Laila Hmoud, said: "Normalisation cannot be achieved by a stroke of a pen or a decision; the people themselves are the ones to decide whether normalisation is necessary or not."

The row among writers in Jordan naturally did not escape the attention of Adonis who resides in Paris. The poet wrote an article refuting accusations against him.

In that article, Adonis sought to refute all the accusations levelled against him and scolded the Arab Writers Union by saying that he could not hold dialogue with "ignorance."

The London-based Al Hayat newspaper published Adonis' article together with a short speech that the poet made at the Granada meeting with Israeli writers. In that speech Adonis poses a question to the Israelis: "Will Israel give Judaism a cultural dimension that would make it fit within its geographical environment?"

Unlike Adonis and the rest of Jordanian writers, the Palestinian-Israeli novelist Emile Habibi, who won Israel's highest literary award in 1992, was the most forthcoming writer on his defence of normalisation.

Habibi, who until he accepted the Israeli award in 1992 was the darling of Arab intellectuals for his deep portrayal of Palestinian suffering in Israel, accused the Jordanian writers of wanting the Palestinians to continue to be the scapegoats of the conflict in the Middle East.

"The Arab psyche is wandering without a hero, a Palestinian hero," Habibi wrote. "The tragedy of Arab writers is that they found singing the praises of the Palestinian hero is easier for them than facing up to the real challenges."

COLUMN

Japanese don't trust bureaucrats

TOKYO (R) — More than half the Japanese do not trust their nation's once-hallowed bureaucrats, saying they work for the interests of business or their ministries rather than the public, a survey published Sunday said. Thirty-two per cent of respondents to the survey — conducted last week by the Asahi Shimbun — said they thought bureaucrats worked on behalf of business, 15 per cent said they worked for politicians and 31 per cent said they worked for the interests of their ministries. Only 14 per cent said they worked for the people. Seven per cent said they did not trust bureaucrats at all, while 44 per cent did not trust them much. Just three per cent said they trusted them a lot, while 41 per cent said they trusted them to a certain extent. Hailed in the past as the architects of Japan's post-war "economic miracle", bureaucrats have been under attack recently for allegedly hindering development of new businesses through over-zealous regulation. In questions about the image of bureaucrats, 28 per cent of respondents said they were inflexible, 22 per cent said they had a strong desire for promotion, 13 per cent called them irresponsible and eight per cent said they were self-important. Only 21 per cent assessed them positively, saying they were able, committed or "clean". Asahi questioned 3,000 people nationwide aged 20 or older, and got replies from 2,407, or 80 per cent.

Japanese children flood bullying hotline

TOKYO (R) — Seventy children called a Japanese "bullying hotline" on its first day of operation, complaining of physical intimidation and psychological torment at school, the Japan Times reported Sunday. The hotline was set up Saturday in Tokyo by a group of lawyers in response to an increase in bullying and harassment in schools, the newspaper said. A middle school second year student, about 14 years old, phoned and said her hair had started falling out because, when her teacher divided the class into groups, her group refused to accept her. "If you are with us the average intelligence of the group will be low," they told her. One boy in his first year of high school, about 16 years old, said he had paid a bully 50,000 yen (nearly \$500) under threat of violence. A girl in the sixth grade, with students about 12 years old, called from the northern island of Hokkaido to say that when she touched her desk, her classmates told her she had made it dirty. According to the Ministry of Education figures, there were over 23,000 incidents of bullying reported in Japan's state schools in the 1992 business year, up five per cent over the previous year, the paper said. Separately, a teacher in Matsuomoto, central Japan, slapped 33 students in the third year of middle school — about 15 years old — about the face last week for being lazy, the daily Yomiuri reported Sunday. He injured 10 of them. Two boys suffered damage to their eardrums, another boy was concussed, and two boys and five girls received cut mouths. The teacher, 26 years old and male, later visited the homes of the two boys